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WORLD-POLITICS

BERLIN : WASHINGTON.

BERLIN, *July, 1907.*

THE development of the domestic situation in Germany, and the success or failure of Prince von Bülow's experiment of governing with a Liberal-Conservative *Bloc*, hinge upon the extent to which the Government is able or willing to fulfil its programme of social and economic reforms. The essential features of this programme are still as vague as they were when the new Reichstag assembled before Easter, and its fulfilment is far too dependent on the sincerity of the Government's professions of Liberalism to be forecast even in outline.

In the mean time the resignation of Count Posadowsky, who for ten years has presided over the Imperial Home Office, has not reassured Prince von Bülow's Liberal and Radical supporters with regard to his willingness or ability to keep faith with his new majority. The ex-Secretary of State for the Interior was by far the ablest of the Imperial Chancellor's coadjutors in the government of the Empire. His unrivalled grasp of the multitudinous affairs of his department and his assiduity, combined with an infinite capacity for taking pains, made him the ideal type of the official which the Prussian bureaucratic system was intended to produce. Conscientious and invariably self-informed, he was a minor Providence to the nation, and in Parliament a tower of strength to the Government. By birth a nobleman and a member of the landed and propertied classes, he nevertheless managed during his forty years of continuous public service to keep abreast, and sometimes ahead, of modern requirements and ideas. If the tinge of paternalism which characterized the majority of his social proposals betrayed the training and traditions of their author, they were redeemed and inspired by a

fine and sympathetic spirit of intelligent Liberalism which was universally recognized. Even the uncompromising opposition of the Social Democracy was partially relaxed in Count Posadowsky's favor. But he was no courtier or carpet knight, like Prince von Bülow, and his undivided attention to the details of his department, which he controlled in all its branches, won for him in the highest quarters the unenviable reputation of a pedant. In addition to his commanding intellect, which made the Chancellor's more superficial arts and crafts seem small by comparison, Count Posadowsky labored under the disability of differing from his official chief on questions of political and Parliamentary tactics. The latest occasion upon which this divergence manifested itself was at the dissolution of the Reichstag last December, which Count Posadowsky regarded as an act of temerity. Perhaps he realized too keenly the artificial character of the theatrical campaign against the Centre party, and he may have apprehended the truth that, in reality, the Chancellor had staked his political existence in order to defeat a powerful Court clique, which had set itself to undermine his position in the Emperor William's favor. If all that has been said and written about this so-called camarilla during the last few months is only approximately true, the history of its intrigues forms one of the most instructive documents in modern German politics. In countries where the process of government is conducted in public, machinations of this kind would be impossible, even on the part of competent and experienced politicians. But the camarilla has been exposed, and in the event Prince von Bülow was so far successful that, although he completely failed to weaken the Parliamentary Centre party, against which the dissolution was ostensibly directed, he inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Social Democrats by a questionable appeal to "national" sentiment.

But the Imperial Chancellor's triumph entailed a number of obligations, the fulfilment of which demanded the whole-hearted cooperation of the Government, and in particular of the Imperial Secretary of State for the Interior. Count Posadowsky, however, remained sceptical as to the ultimate success of Prince von Bülow's experiment, and his attitude even in Parliament implied a doubt as to whether it would be possible to "mate the Liberal with the Conservative spirit" without detriment to the development of social policy. So long as the Conservative and

Agrarian element remains preponderant in Prussia, scepticism as to the possibility of developing social and economic policy on Radical or even Liberal lines in the Empire is justified. Prince von Bülow has tried to bridge over the difficulty by investing the new Imperial Secretary of State for the Interior with the functions of Vice-President of the Prussian Council of Ministers. But the difficulty remains, and is still further intensified by the fact that, whereas in the Empire and in the Reichstag Prince von Bülow, as Imperial Chancellor, is trying to govern against the Centre party, in Prussia and in the Diet the same statesman, as Prussian Minister-President, has to rely upon the Centre in order to conduct his policy in its most important branches. The situation is Gilbertian and untenable. As Count Posadowsky was unable to lend the experiment his whole-hearted support, he was compelled to resign. Through Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, the promoted Prussian Minister of the Interior, and by the prospective creation of a new Imperial Labor Office, Prince von Bülow is hoping that he has found the solution of this complicated problem. In order to compensate the Liberals for the dismissal of Count Posadowsky, the Imperial Chancellor has also sacrificed Dr. von Studt, the Prussian Minister of Education, who has long been the *bête noire* of intelligent Liberalism in Germany. But an equally acceptable successor in the eyes of the orthodox Conservatives has been discovered for the post.

A by no means negligible advantage which accrues to the Imperial Chancellor from the delegation of a large number of his duties, both in the Empire and in Prussia, to the new Imperial Secretary of State for the Interior, is to be found in the fact that this arrangement allows Prince von Bülow to devote himself more exclusively to foreign affairs. Foreign policy is the Chancellor's peculiar domain, and he has never, not even when his physical and intellectual energies were unimpaired, exhibited any marked aptitude for assimilating the great principles of social and political economy of which Count Posadowsky was so preeminently master. The task with which Prince von Bülow is confronted is no mean one, and it will require all his diplomatic talents to overcome the difficulties of the situation to the satisfaction of his critics in Germany.

The belief that Germany is a "sated" Power may have been true of the quarter of a century which immediately succeeded

the war with France. But since that period forces have arisen which have gradually tended to shake this belief. During the last decade Germany has been impelled into activity, partly by the force of her own industrial and commercial evolution and partly by the force of international factors. The first has imposed upon her obligations and responsibilities far beyond her boundaries in Europe. The second, on the other hand, has been called into being by the political deductions which she has attempted to draw, not only in Europe, from her victories in the wars against Denmark, Austria and France, but also in *Welt-politik*, as the result of her commercial expansion. That Germany has kept the peace for more than a generation redounds to her credit, in so far as the maintenance of peace has depended upon her discretion. On the other hand, the direction which has been given to German policy and the attributes, material and moral, with which it has been invested by the Emperor William and his Government have suggested inferences which Powers jealous of their own standing could not possibly ignore. Just as the Franco-Prussian alliance was intended to redress the Continental balance of power after the consolidation of Germany, so the Anglo-French *entente cordiale* and its ancillary agreements have been designed to restore the equilibrium of Europe, after the defeat of Russia in East Asia, and the consequent reassertion of the preponderance of the Triple Alliance. While this readjustment assures the continuance of normal conditions, it also acts as a salutary curb upon any aspirations which Germany may be tempted to entertain. There is abundant evidence that Germany is chafing under this restraint. Prince von Bülow is inordinately fond of repeating that "pressure is bound to create counter-pressure," and at the same time the assurance is reiterated that Germany has no ambitions outside the commercial sphere. It would be interesting to know why, if she cherishes no aspirations which are incompatible with the interests of the Western European Powers, the Anglo-Franco-Spanish exchange of guarantees is wantonly interpreted as a menace to her position. The attempt to undermine the Anglo-French *entente* by raising the so-called Morocco "question" proved a failure. The reception which has been accorded in authoritative quarters in Germany to the new agreements between England, France and Spain shows that German statesmen are beginning to realize the

futility of trying to break up the understanding between these Mediterranean Powers. If Great Britain is to be displaced from her position athwart the path of German ambitions, the attack will have to be delivered in another quarter. There are an increasing number of indications that German policy is casting about for some means of counterbalancing what the German reptile press habitually calls the "anti-German Trust." Exactly half a century ago the late Prince Bismarck described Prussian foreign policy in his day as "a passive aimlessness (or an aimless passivity), which was only too glad to be left alone." To-day, after the lapse of fifty years, there is much the same kind of passivity, but there are signs that definite aims are shaping themselves. For the present, *l'Allemagne se recueille*. The question is how long the domestic situation will permit or compel the Government to remain inactive, and how long German prestige can afford to abide natural and spontaneous developments.

Germany, it is frequently repeated, is strong enough to stand by herself. To all practical intents and purposes this boast is justified. But, at the same time, the growth of potent factors in world-politics, like America and Japan, and, above all, the comprehensive network of *ententes* which a far-seeing British policy has created, have robbed "isolation" of much of the splendor which formerly attached to this condition. The value of a purely Continental insurance policy like the Triple Alliance, moreover, tends to depreciate in proportion as German interests expand beyond Europe. From the moral point of view, again, the disadvantage of being identified with purely reactionary forces, like the Tsar, the Sultan and the Pope, has long been keenly felt in Germany. The prospect of a *rapprochement* between England and Russia, combined with the latter's defeat by Japan, the repeated shocks which Mohammedan confidence in Germany has sustained, and the estrangement of German Catholicism in the Empire itself have considerably weakened Germany's second line of defence in Europe.

If the necessity for a change of policy, as a result of the growth of oversea "interests" and the decline of traditional alliances and friendships be conceded, the field within which this change can be effected is restricted. After the unfortunate experiences of recent years, it is extremely improbable that, whichever party may be in power, Great Britain should again allow herself to hew

wood and draw water in the service of German *Weltpolitik*. France again, quite apart from her sympathetic understanding with England, cannot be counted upon to stultify herself so far as to enter into intimate relations with Germany upon the mere strength of assurances which have repeatedly been dishonored in the past. Progress in this direction, if it is to be permanent, must necessarily be slow. There may be financial cooperation between the two Powers, and disputed questions outside Europe may ultimately lead to a Franco-German colonial understanding; but for the immediate future no closer relationship can be contemplated. In view of these considerations, there are not a few people in Germany to whom an understanding either with America or with Japan has presented itself as an alternative. The realization of this object, however, admittedly postulates that England and France should be kept in check, and that their suspicions should be lulled until the end in view has been attained.

So far, there is no good reason for believing that Germany has yet made up her mind in either of these directions. Indeed, the choice is no easy one, and the difficulty is still further enhanced by the belief, which is steadily gaining ground in Germany, that a conflict between America and Japan is sooner or later inevitable. An extraordinary interest is being displayed in the various phases of the diplomatic exchanges which have recently characterized the relations between the two Pacific Powers. Every effort is being made to conceal this interest and to neutralize, as far as possible, the effect of a compliment to one of the parties by a tribute in honor of the other. Even the semi-official press has been instructed to deny a suggestion, which has never been advanced in any responsible quarter, to the effect that Germany has in no way fomented the differences which have arisen between the two Powers. Symptoms of this kind sufficiently indicate a sensitive interest which the outside world may be excused for interpreting upon the one hypothesis. Delicate as the discussion of the subject may be, it is perhaps noteworthy that a good deal of attention has been attracted in Germany by a statement that America has declined an alleged offer of good offices on the part of France in the present state of friction between the United States and Japan. Whether Germany cherishes aspirations of her own, in welcoming the elimination of France as a rival for the good graces of America, it is too early to say. But

England still remains to be dealt with. In the case of England, however, there is, from the German point of view, the added difficulty that she is at present on equally good terms with Japan as with America. And Japan, as it is reluctantly acknowledged, is quite capable of becoming useful to Germany, especially if the latter proposes to develop her interests in East Asia. Those who witnessed the reception at Kiel, a few weeks ago, of a Japanese squadron and the attentions which have been showered upon Admiral Baron Yamamoto and other distinguished Japanese visitors, will have reflected that times have changed since the Emperor William issued his pictorial appeal to the nations to guard their holiest possessions against the "Yellow Peril." The question of, it may be, the near future will be whether Germany proposes to await the issue of a conflict which is widely predicted in the German press as inevitable, in order that she may make her terms with the victor, or whether at the critical moment she will openly range herself on the side of America. The completion of the Panama Canal may find the German navy in a sufficiently advanced stage of development to permit of a conclusion.

The efforts which have recently been made to infuse a measure of cordiality into Anglo-German relations, and upon which the Emperor William's forthcoming visit to England is designed to set a seal, are eminently characteristic of the new development in German policy. If Germany is to succeed in her attempt to place England in a position in which the latter might eventually be compelled to choose between America and Japan, it is necessary to gain time. There is, too, the further consideration that the semblance of good relations with England would materially facilitate German efforts to gain the friendship of America. Until Germany's object is attained, she is quite capable of playing off one against the other. England has already, at a previous period, served as the pivot of manœuvres of this kind, in the days when Germany was more intent upon inveigling herself into the favor of Russia than she is at present. The experiment may be repeated with America as the objective. The temporary advantages which America stands to gain from a working *entente* with Germany might prove to be considerable. If America, for example, were to find herself irresistibly drawn into a struggle for supremacy in the Pacific, the presence of a capable watch-dog in Europe might free her from certain conceivable anxieties.

It is difficult to say how far Germany is seriously dallying with this idea, but both in this country and in America there are classes to whom the prospect is not distasteful. Foreign visitors to Germany, especially if they enjoy a measure of distinction at home and are reasonably unacquainted with the language, are tempted into undertaking singular excursions into the domain of politics, and the echo of their voices pursues them back to their native land in an unrecognizable form. The Germans celebrate, and frequently deserve, cheap triumphs in this direction. Unfortunately, however, the hospitality which is bestowed upon the visitors is largely of that prearranged variety which precludes fair judgment. The newcomers are duly impressed with the stucco-fronted modernity of German development, with the model solicitude of the State for its citizens from the cradle to the grave, and with the progressive notions which are cheapest in the quarters where they are most inveterately ignored. The underlying principle of this artificial structure is apt to escape attention. The essential character of the German State will not be changed either by reason of the patronage of science and of approved branches of art, or as a result of the advancement of learning and of the encouragement of social policy. Neither will practical proposals at the Hague Conference, to compensate for the decided opposition to disarmament in any form, nor plausible attempts to improve German relations with England and France, avail to change the fundamental principles for which Germany stands to-day. Those who have carefully studied the development of modern Germany and who have traced German policy to its springs, are not satisfied that intimate relations with the German Empire are compatible with the interests of any essentially democratic community.

WASHINGTON, *July, 1907.*

ALTHOUGH, at the hour when we write, neither President Roosevelt nor a single member of his Cabinet remains in the Federal capital, it is safe to say that there are more veteran and expert politicians left in Washington than could be found in a dozen of the United States. Dozens of ex-Representatives, ex-Governors, nay, ex-Senators and ex-diplomatists are scattered through the Departments, so that, even in midsummer, there is no lack of keen observers and shrewd commentators. They have

plenty of leisure, too, for retrospect and forecast, since the driving wheels of the Executive machinery are no longer running under a full head of steam. What are the topics that just now command the attention of these salaried onlookers, who, perhaps, see more of the political and international game than they did when they took a hand in it? The topics of most interest are three: first, the extent to which the relations of the United States and Japan are likely to be affected by the signs of grave trouble for the last-named Power in Corea; secondly, the prospect of securing acceptance of any of the proposals made by the United States at The Hague Conference; and, lastly, the question whether there is the faintest ray of hope of Democratic success in the next Presidential election.

As for the attempt of German, French, and some American newspapers to excite apprehension that a war may be the outcome of the treatment of Japanese sojourners in San Francisco, it may now be said to have miscarried. Even the reported intention of our Navy Department to send, some months hence, all of our first-class battle-ships to San Francisco has failed to provoke any official protest on the part of the Tokio Government, although one of our best friends among the "Elder Statesmen," the Marquis Ito, now Resident-General at Seoul, has suggested that the demonstration of our sea-power in the Pacific might be looked upon as ill timed and as tending to arouse unfounded expectations on the part of the disaffected Coreans. It is obvious, indeed, that Corea is the vulnerable point of the Mikado's Empire. Nor can it be denied that the Corean Emperor was guilty of a personal breach of faith and of a flagrant violation of treaty obligations, when he authorized a delegation to proceed to The Hague and there request the recognition by the Peace Conference of Corea as an independent Power. The request was rejected, because the representatives of Japan had no difficulty in showing that, so far as international relations were concerned, the Corean sovereign had renounced the status of independence, and could no more lay claim to it than could the Queen of Madagascar after she had formally assented to her deposition at the hands of France. It is true that, by a protocol signed at Tokio on April 25th, 1898, the Governments of Japan and Russia severally recognized the sovereignty and entire independence of Corea, and reciprocally engaged to refrain from any direct interference in the

internal affairs of that country. If that protocol were still binding, the demand of the delegates of Corea for admission to The Hague Conference could not have been refused. It was superseded, however, by the agreement between Japan and Corea, signed on August 22nd, 1904 (about six months after the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War), which provided that the Seoul Government should employ as diplomatic adviser to the Department of Foreign Affairs a foreigner recommended by the Japanese Government, with the understanding that no important matters concerning foreign relations should be dealt with except after his counsel had been taken. The agreement also provided that the Seoul Government should consult the Mikado's Ministers before concluding treaties and conventions with foreign Powers. Finally, on November 17th, 1905 (about three months after the conclusion of the Peace of Portsmouth), the Seoul and Tokio Governments entered into an agreement that thereafter the Japanese Department of Foreign Affairs should have control and direction of the external relations and affairs of Corea, and the diplomatic and consular representatives of Japan should have charge of the subjects of interest to Corea in foreign countries. By another article of the same agreement, the Corean Government formally pledged itself not to conclude thereafter any act or engagement having an international character, except through the medium of the Government of Japan. In view of the documents here reproduced in substance, it is clear that the Corean Emperor had no right to despatch a delegation to The Hague Conference, and it is not surprising that, having been convicted of perjury, he should now be called upon by the head of his own Ministry, backed, of course, by Resident-General Ito, to abdicate in favor of the Crown Prince, who, it is known, would be a puppet in Japanese hands.

While, however, the Japanese have a treaty right to object to the despatch of a Corean delegation to The Hague, there is reason to believe that, if the Corean sovereign should be visited with the penalty of deposition, and of deportation to Tokio, not all but many of the inhabitants of Corea would be wrought to an exasperation that would find vent on the first favorable occasion. Now, in the Corean Empire, there are said to be no fewer than twenty million inhabitants, while, as yet, only about 50,000 Japanese are even alleged to have settled in the peninsula. Un-

der the circumstances, it is obvious that if the Japanese, being beaten at sea, should find their communications with Corea interrupted, they would find it impossible to retain a foothold in the peninsula for any extended period. They cannot, therefore, afford to confront the risk of a contest with all the first-class battle-ships of the United States, for they would have incomparably more at stake than would their opponents. The continued possession of Corea is of vital moment to Japan, whereas we could lose all our insular possessions in the Pacific without suffering any pecuniary detriment. Indeed, it would be money in our pockets to let the whole of them go, though, of course, our national dignity would not permit us to let them be wrested from us by force.

Although we have sent to The Hague a delegation of exceptional prestige and influence, headed as it is by ex-Ambassador Choate and ex-Ambassador Porter, the situation seems unfavorable to the accomplishment of any of our principal aims. We desired, first, to establish the principle of the inviolability of the private property of the subjects or citizens of a belligerent at sea; secondly, to forbid the collection by force of contractual debts, until the claims should have been adjudged valid by The Hague permanent Court of Arbitration, and until the debtor-State should have refused to comply with the decision of that tribunal. In the third place, we wished to extend materially the scope of The Hague Court of Arbitration; and, finally, we were prepared to second England's request for a substantial reduction of military armaments. The inviolability of the private property of a belligerent at sea, which we urged upon European Powers at the time of the Declaration of Paris (1856), was earnestly advocated at The Hague by Mr. Choate, who succeeded in rallying to its support almost two-thirds of the delegates belonging to the appropriate committee, who, moreover, represented a population exceeding by scores of millions that of the countries arrayed in opposition to his proposal. The ostensible success, however, can have no practical result, since the countries that he failed to convince will continue to repudiate the desired principle, and among these are such great maritime Powers as Great Britain, France, Japan and Russia.

As for our effort to enlarge the powers of The Hague permanent Court of Arbitration, much will, of course, be effected

in that direction if we can persuade the Conference to prohibit such a collection by force of contractual debts as was practised by Great Britain in the case of Egypt, and by Great Britain, Germany and Italy in the case of Venezuela—until, that is to say, the validity of a creditor's claim shall have been certified by impartial arbitrators. There is, as yet, grave doubt whether the principal creditor-Powers will tolerate the introduction of such a change in the law of nations, a change which is viewed askance even by some solvent Latin-American republics, like Brazil and Mexico, who are accustomed to pay their debts punctually, and are loath to see their present excellent credit on the European stock-exchanges impaired in the slightest degree, as it might be, if the validity of a claim had to be left to the adjudication of The Hague tribunal.

With regard to the prospect of Democratic success at the next Presidential election, most of the astute observers in Washington think that if the Democratic National Convention were held this autumn Mr. William J. Bryan would be made the nominee by more than a two-thirds vote; not that the delegates would have any hope of electing him, but because, as yet, he has no active and popular competitor. We have learned, indeed, whom Colonel Watterson, of the Louisville "*Courier-Journal*," had in mind when he said that he could name a Democrat living west of the Alleghanies and north of the Ohio to whom the Bryanites could have no objection, and yet who would have a fair chance of securing a majority of the electoral votes. He referred to John A. Johnson, now for a second term Democratic Governor of Minnesota. It is a remarkable fact that in 1904, although Mr. Roosevelt carried Minnesota by 161,464, Mr. Johnson, as the Democratic candidate for Governor, secured a plurality of 6,352. That Governor Johnson gave satisfaction to his fellow citizens is evident from the fact that, last year, he was reëlected by a plurality of 76,633. Being of Scandinavian parentage, he would naturally have a strong pull on all the Scandinavian population of the Northwest, which is by no means concentrated in the single State of Minnesota. This, at least, may be urged on behalf of Governor Johnson, that he is far more likely than Mr. W. J. Bryan to carry his own State. As yet, however, the former's reputation is purely local, and there is scarcely time enough left before June, 1908, in which to make him a national figure.